

Purpose of Cataloguing

There is a purpose for every action taken or assignment engaged in. Based on this, it is good for you to know the rationale behind cataloguing as it aids in information retrieval processes in the library. According to Adedibu et.al. (2009), the purpose of organizing library materials are:

1. to make the location of library materials easy
2. to save time and space
3. to facilitate easy accessibility to the materials
4. to enhance the effective utilization of the materials
5. to make the library attractive to its users

Besides, other rationales of cataloguing are:

6. to provide all information necessary to describe all items accurately to distinguish it from other items.
7. to provide the location with a particular library material materials in the collection.
8. to record books and other materials in the library.
9. to interpret reading materials to the reader by mentioning the essential elements such as; the author, title, imprint collation series, bibliography, subject etc

The library catalogue should, therefore be equipped to deal with the principle channels of enquiry. The purpose of the catalogue is:

- a) To enable a person to find a book of which either the
 - author or organization having intellectual responsibility is known
 - title is known
 - subject is known
 - category is known
- b) To show what the library has
 - by a given author or organization

- on a given subject
 - in a given kind of literature or form of material
- c) To assist the user in the choice of a book as to its
- edition
 - content
 - physical form

The library catalogue thus assists the user in accurate and speedy determination of whether or not an item known by author or title is in the collection and if so, where it may be found. It also tells what materials the library contains on a given subject and where they may be found.

Functions of Cataloguing

The following highlights are the role cataloguing play in the information retrieval processes:

1. It should assist in the choice of library materials as to its edition (bibliographical) and as to its character
2. It should enable an information seeker to find a library material of which either the author or the title or the subject is known
3. It should show what the library has by a given author on a given subject or a given kind of library material

Objectives of Cataloguing

Cataloguing is intended to bring clarity on the following outlines:

1. **Author:** It clearly states the name of the author at the entry point. The author is identified
2. **Title:** The title can be identified by preparing entry under title
3. **By an Author:** To identify the works of a particular author and the references made patterning to the book or the author
4. **Subject:** Subject can be identified by preparing the subject entries made under a classification number in the classified catalogue and the subject headings or descriptive term in dictionary catalogue.
5. **Kind of Literature:** A list is made for the collection of one form such list fulfills

I the objective of providing information on the whole collection of a particular term of literature. The term of presentation may also be a sub-heading

Challenges in Cataloguing

Despite the inevitability of cataloguing in the information retrieval structure of library resources, some issues confront it especially among the libraries in the developing world and these include among others:

1. Use of outdated cataloguing and classification tools.
2. inadequate knowledge of cataloguing and classification rules
3. poor interpretation and application of these rules,
4. backlogs,
5. lack of stationary
6. shortage of professional staff

Remedies to Cataloguing Challenges

Scholars have suggested ways to overcome the challenges encountered in cataloguing library materials to include:

1. regular review of cataloguing scheme
2. creation of a simpler cataloguing and classification scheme
3. allocation of more teaching and practice time in library schools
4. recruitment of dedicated and cataloguing oriented personnel
5. the use of up-to-date cataloguing techniques
6. avoiding unnecessary details that sometimes confuse both the cataloguers and the users

TYPES OF CATALOGUE

- Printed book catalogue
- Sheaf catalogue
- Card catalogue

- Shelf list
- Computerized Catalogue

a) Printed Book Catalogue

As the name suggests, it resembles a book or a register in appearance. The entries are printed on separate sheets as per desired arrangement and the sheets are then bound together to form a book or register. It is easy to prepare, however, it lacks flexibility. Entries for newly coming books cannot be accommodated at proper places, hence, it requires frequent revisions. As such it is not economical to keep it up-to-date. Moreover, it cannot be used by more than one user simultaneously. Only a single user can use it at a time. However, it has the advantage of portability. Its use is not subject to the availability of electricity and is free from any machinery fault.

b) The Sheaf Catalogue

This form consists of separate sheets, preferably of manila paper, on which a couple of entries are printed. The sheets in turn are punched at one side and loosely bound either with a spiral thread or a comb spine. This form resembles the book form, as it shares most of the advantages of the book form. It is a bit superior to the book form in the sense that it partly overcomes the non-flexibility problem faced by the former. However, it becomes much voluminous and has a disadvantage as the flimsy paper of the catalogue entries make insertion and withdrawal less convenient.

c) The Card Catalogue

The non-flexibility problem faced by the previous physical forms of the catalogue was gravely felt. In order to eradicate it fully, stiff paper cards of the dimension of 12.5 X 7.5 cm (3 x 5 in.) size and 0.25 mm thickness are used to prepare different catalogue entries discussed earlier. One card is used for every individual entry, main or the added. The card has a small hole in the lower middle part, so that each card can be inserted into a steel rod. The cards held together by the steel rod are arranged as per the desired sequence in wooden trays. The wooden trays are then placed in the pigeon holes of the catalogue cabinet. Each tray, on its outer face is marked by an appropriate label in alphabetical or classified sequence, the sequence in which the cards are arranged inside. Entries for newly coming books can be accommodated at proper places. It does not require frequent revisions. As such, it is economical to keep it up-to-date. Moreover, it can be used by more than one user simultaneously; each user can use one or the other tray at a particular time. Its use is not subject to the availability of elec

tricity. It is free from any machinery fault. However, such catalogue is voluminous and lacks portability. Generally, it is said that to browse the cards is more cumbersome than the book or sheaf form of catalogue.

d) Shelf list

It is a catalogue of books and represents the order in which they stand on the shelves. Here each document title is represented by a card with all the bibliographical details as in the case of the catalogue card. The shelf list is very useful tool for stock taking process in the library, as for each document there is a card exactly depicting its location on the shelf.

e) Computerized catalogue

The problems faced by the previous forms of catalogue have been overcome to a great extent by the computers. With the advent of computers, the library activities ranging from acquisition to withdrawal of books from the library records can be automated. Same is the fate of cataloguing. The process not only helps in preparation of different catalogue entries, but also, in generation of book type or card type printouts. In addition, it has revolutionized the storage and retrieval mechanism of the libraries through its electronic version. As a matter of fact, OPAC (On line Public Access Catalogues) are nowadays available in libraries. The OPAC can, not only be used on a stand-alone computer, but can also be put on the INTRA or INTERNET. This makes it possible for a library to extend its services not only to its clientele but to the interested / needy persons of the locality, region, nation or the entire world. OPAC or computerised catalogue is very dynamic in the sense that it is highly flexible, easy and economical to maintain and capable of meeting almost every possible approach of the user. The searching capability is very fast and accurate. A number of libraries in our country are computerizing their catalogue and the list of library materials is displayed on the screen. Although rather expensive, it has the advantage of updation, no wear-tear in use and multiple storing of the catalogue. A printed copy of the whole catalogue can also be produced through a printer connected to the computer.

OPAC AND WEB OPAC

The problems faced by the various physical forms of catalogue have been addressed to a great extent by the computers. With the advent of computers, the library activities ranging from acquisition to withdrawal of books from the library records can be automated. Same is the fate of cataloguing. The process not only helps in preparation of different catalogue entries, but also, in generation of book type or card type printouts. In addition, it has revolutionized the storag

e and retrieval mechanism of the libraries through its electronic version. As a matter of fact, OPACs and Web OPACs are nowadays available in libraries.

OPAC

An Online Public Access Catalogue (often abbreviated as OPAC) is an online database of materials held by a library or group of libraries. An OPAC contains all the bibliographic information of a library and is in other words, a gateway to a library's collection. According to ALA Glossary, an OPAC can be defined as "A computer based library catalogue (bibliographic database) designed to be accessed via terminals so that library users may directly and effectively search for and retrieve bibliographic records". The OPAC can not only be used on a stand-alone computer, but can also be put on the INTRA or INTERNET. This makes it possible for a library to extend its services not only to its users but also to the other interested persons of the locality, region, nation or the entire world. OPAC or computerized catalogue is very dynamic, in the sense, that it is highly flexible, easy and economical to maintain and capable to meet almost every possible approach of the user. The searching capability is very fast and accurate. It can be used by any number of users. The wireless technology and laptop computers nowadays have made it quite portable. The power storage devices and the UPS devices have also eliminated its dependability on electricity to a great extent.

Web OPAC

Web OPAC is an OPAC which is provided on the web and with the help of internet any user can access it from anywhere. Whereas OPAC can facilitate a user to access materials while in the library, Web OPAC has the advantage of being available world wide and accessible any time. The status of a book may be known as the book is issued or on shelf, lost or transferred, etc. Here, an interface exists to provide access to the system in a manner that is complete, efficient and acceptable to the users. As Web OPAC is accessible through internet, it is possible to search independently by author, keyword, title or year of a document. Complete bibliographic information is available. In other words, all features of an OPAC are present and also there is facility to use hypertext links due to availability of Graphical user interface. OPAC is thus an interactive search module of an automated library management system. Any bibliographic record can be searched directly from a link from a database of the library or remotely through networks. This ensures that a lot of cataloguing activity is reduced with the availability of Web OPACs. Web OPACs improve the quality, speed and performance of the services offered by the modern libraries. Users have the facility to see the entire range of library collection and know about the issue status of each document of the library.

Difference between Card Catalogue, OPAC and Web OPAC

S / N	Card catalogue	OPAC	Web OPAC
1	Only one user can use at a time	Large number of users can use at the same time from various access points	Large number of users can use at the same time from various access points
2	Users can search only by a single access point, e.g., author, title, subject heading.	Users have many access points, e.g., author, title, subject heading, ISBN keywords, etc.,	Users have many access points, e.g., author, title, subject heading, ISBN keywords, etc.
3	Cannot use in electronic environment	Users can broaden or narrow down search by use of various search operators	Users can broaden or narrow down search by use of various search operators.
4	Usage is limited within library only.	Usage is limited as only the user within a LAN can use it.	Usage is global, as a user can access it from anywhere, at anytime
5	Library is to follow cataloguing rules / codes	Users have to follow the OPAC software of the particular library	As here HTML files are used, which are hyperlinked to the subject area or the discipline